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East County 'hitters' take their swings for Cerebral Palsy

by Greg Eichelberger

Four East County individuals, Tiffany Julson and Aaron Shelton of El Cajon, Aaron Fortson of Santee, and Lakeside's Mike Brown, were on hand last week at Jack Murphy Stadium in an attempt to belt a home run off former Padre Cy Young winner, Randy Jones, or "master the murph," as part of a fundraiser for United Cerebral Palsy.

And while no one actually hit a round-tripper, great fun was had by all in this charity affair held to promote awareness and raise funds for United Cerebral Palsy of San Diego.

Over \$9,000 (\$1,000 per contestant) was earned in the event, which took place before the Padre-Phillies battle during the most recent home stand, and was sponsored by Thrifty/Payless drug stores, with support from several other corporations.

Julson and Shelton both work at Union Bank, Santee and Allied Gardens, respectively, and were chosen by lot out of over 500 entries. "The form read, 'this could be you,'" said Julson, the only female among the nine contestants. "So I filled it out and thought, 'sure, no problem,' sent it in, and that guy over there (pointing to Shelton) and I were chosen for this."

She said, "I play softball for a team in El Cajon. I'm brand new at it, but I play. I just wanted to hit the ball, but I figured it wouldn't go very far."

Fortson, an employee of Ada Laboratories, was picked by the management of his company to take part in the contest. "Probably because I have the best swing," he joked. "But all kidding aside, I think that even though I didn't do too much, it's just the ability to come here, see the Padres up close, help the cause and watch the game, that's important to me."

"I feel fantastic being here on the field. I think it's everyone's dream to be able to do something like this." Even if he failed to send one over the wall, Fortson, who has lived in Santee for 14 years, had plenty of support, as his wife and children cheered him on from field level seats.

Randy Jones, whose pitches never traveled more than 50 MPH during his prime, was a bit slower, but his erratic tosses kept the would-be Caminiti's off-stride, though a few got in some decent rips. "That was exhausting," Jones said after it was over, sitting in the dugout, trying to catch his breath. "I haven't worked this hard in years."

He also absorbed a little good-natured ribbing after the game by his co-hosts on KFMB's "Padre Talk," but took it all in stride, and said he would love to do it again.

And although none of those participating hit a HR, the longest ball, a shot to dead centerfield, was cracked off the bat of Lakesider Mike Brown, a manager at the Thrifty/Payless store in Spring Valley. For his herculean effort, Brown won a three-hour limousine trip, dinner and tickets to an upcoming Padre game.

He can also place his name next to some famous Padre sluggers of the past, such as Nate Colbert, Dave Winfield, Steve Garvey and Joe Carter, in his own mind, at least.

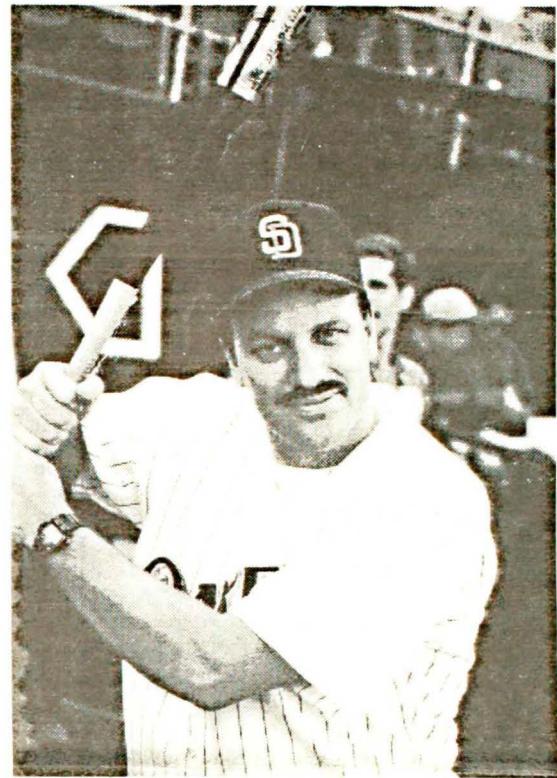
"I felt funny out there on the field," said Brown, who has lived in Lakeside for six months, after moving from Lemon Grove. "It's kind weird batting in front of all of these people, but I felt good about my hit and helping out U.C.P."

The genesis of the idea came as David and Mark Carucci, media directors for United Cerebral Palsy, were watching a game from Fenway Park in Boston.

"That's where we first got the idea," said Mark. "When we saw the Red Sox do it, we figured why not try it here. So we went to the Padres and after ironing everything out, came up with what people saw here tonight."

"I have to say that the management people went out of their way to help us make this event special. They allowed the nine people to use their locker room, had Padre jerseys and batting helmets for them and even let them practice the day before. I can't say enough about how we were treated."

Hoping to make this an even bigger affair next year, U.C.P. plans to conduct a tournament, and have team



Mike Brown, former Lemon Grove resident, won the "Home Run" contest with a deep drive. Brown is a manager at the Thrifty/Payless in Spring Valley.

home run-hitting contests, in addition to attracting more corporate sponsors. "This was a test this year," said Carucci, "just to see if we could pull it off. It's obvious that we did, so next season we're planning even bigger and better things."

For more information on United Cerebral Palsy of San Diego, call 571-5365.

East County Pop Warner leagues ready for season start

by Greg Eichelberger

The 1996 Pop Warner/Pee Wee Football League and cheer-leading season begins next week with dozens of teams and hundreds of youngsters preparing to do battle on gridirons throughout the East County.

Starting on Saturday, teams from the Grossmont/La Mesa, Spring Valley/Lemon Grove (Lake Toros), Santee/Lakeside and El Cajon regions will flip coins and the first of eight regular season games will kick off.

Those fortunate enough to survive those contests with winning records, may go on to the play-offs, the "Q" Bowl, regionals, and, perhaps, the national finals.

But for now, local boys and girls, ages 5 - 14, the myriad of coaches, parents and officials, will concentrate on things one game at a time, although they've been practicing since the first of August.

"Everyone is very excited about this season," said Sue McCullough, president of the El Cajon association for the past three years. "We have a

lot of dedicated people helping out in our league, and I look forward to great things."

McCullough has reason to be optimistic. Last season, both the El Cajon football Junior Midget squad and its sister cheerleading team went all the way to the nationals in Florida.

The association is named after Glenn Scobey "Pop" Warner, the college football innovator, who, after World War I, perfected the single and double-wing systems of offense. As a coach at the Carlisle (Pennsylvania) Indian Industrial School, he trained Jim Thorpe, one of this century's greatest athletes. He even came to Thorpe's defense when the International Olympic Committee stripped Thorpe of the medals he won at the 1912 Stockholm games.

Warner also coached teams in Pittsburgh (1915-23) and at Stanford University (1924-32), and accumulated a 312-104-32 record.

In the late 1940s, Warner initiated football leagues for inner-city youth to keep them from drifting into undesirable



An El Cajon Pop Warner player "shows off" his new football uniform.

The concept spread throughout the country, and soon, even suburban kids were getting into the act.

"We have over 450 kids who play in the El Cajon league, alone," said McCullough, who before her tenure as president, was the eligibility director. "So

you can just imagine how popular the program is, countywide."

She also praised the hard work and dedication of those who assist her in her duties. "My volunteers have been wonderful," the Lakeside resident (who has already put two sons through the system) said. "Everything is running smoothly this year. In fact, it's been the easiest season I've had, so far, and I think it will continue to be this way."

"We've had coaches who've played Pop Warner football when they were kids, and now have children of their own who play. We also have managers without kids in the league who enjoy the game so much, they continue to participate."

Bill Scott, whose 9-year-old son, Carlin, is playing in his first year for the Santee/Lakeside league, was looking forward to this season. "He's very excited about playing organized football," he said. Pop Warner football and cheerleading leagues consist of six divisions - Flag (ages 5 - 7); Mitey Mite (ages 7 - 10 who weigh less than 60 pounds); Junior

Pee Wee (ages 8 - 11 who weigh less than 70 pounds); Pee Wee (ages 9 - 12 who weigh less than 85 pounds); Junior Midget (ages 10 - who weigh less than 100 pounds); and Midget (ages 11 - 14) who weigh less than 120 pounds.

El Cajon squads play their home games at El Cajon Valley High School, Santee/Lakeside at Santana High, Spring Valley/Lemon Grove at Mount Miguel and Grossmont/La Mesa at Briercrest Park.

Girls who wish to play football and boys who want to cheer are no problem, but all children must have a physical examination, proof of insurance, a recent report card and a birth certificate to become eligible. Registration fees are \$50 for flag players and cheerleaders and \$100 for tackle players and cheerleaders.

And although it's too late to join a team this year, sign-up will take place at various locations next May.

For more information, call the El Cajon Pop Warner hotline at 681-0722, or Santee/Lakeside at 449-0103.

East County's Negrete now soccer defender for Pride

by Joe Naiman

East County product Brian Negrete's professional soccer career has based him in Portland for at least this year.

The 26-year-old Negrete, who attended El Cajon Valley High School and San Diego State University, was claimed by the Portland Pride of the Continental Indoor Soccer League after three years with the CISL's San Diego Sockers. As he was with the Sockers, Negrete is a stalwart defender for the Pride.

When Negrete came to San Diego with the Pride for the third time this season Aug. 23, he blocked three shots to bring his team-leading total to 36 blocked shots. He also took two shots to give him 30 for the season, and committed four fouls, giving him a team-leading 31.

The game in San Diego was the Pride's 19th of the season.

Negrete, who played in every Sockers' game during his three-year tenure with San Diego, has played in each of Portland's games and entered (and left) San Diego with five goals and three assists, including a goal in his first game with the Pride June 16.

"It's a good team," said Negrete. "Good guys. Our record isn't showing it right now, but we have a good team."

The Pride's record was 7-12 after the 6-5 overtime loss to the Sockers Aug. 23 in which the two teams combined for a league record 112 shots.

The 6'2", 190-pound Negrete was born in New Jersey, but his family moved to the San Diego area when Brian was four. When Brian was 10, he joined the Hotspurs Soccer Club in El Cajon.

Negrete was a three-sport athlete in high school. He played midfield for the Braves' soccer team; served the football team as a wide receiver, place-kicker and punter; and represented the track team in the high jump, long jump and triple jump. The school twice awarded him the soccer team's most-valuable-player honors before he graduated in 1988.

Negrete stayed in town for college, playing four years with the Aztecs. In 1991, his senior year, he scored nine goals and eight assists to lead the team with 26 points. He was the team's most valuable player and earned Far West Region All-America status.

The reorganization of professional indoor soccer in 1992 replaced the winter season with a summer season and kept the Sockers out of action between the time Negrete left San Diego State and the start of the 1993 season in June.

The Sockers secured the rights of the local star, and, in 1993, Negrete became only the



Brian Negrete

second rookie in Sockers' history to play every game. In 28 regular-season games he had 17 goals, nine assists, and 34 blocked shots and was the runner-up for the CISL's rookie-of-the-year award.

The National Professional Soccer League had a winter season. Negrete spent the 1993-1994 NPSL season with the Detroit Rockers, where his statistics included 11 goals, six assists and 23 blocked shots in 33 games.

Negrete returned to the Sockers for the 1994 season. On June 22, Negrete had two goals, two assists and three blocked shots and became the first member of the Sockers ever to win both offensive and defensive star of the game honors for the same game. During the season Negrete racked up 23 assists, tying for the team lead, and scored nine goals. He also blocked 50 shots.

Negrete was more defensively oriented in 1995, scoring eight goals and 13 assists, but blocking 52 shots.

The CISL, which had previously required that 13 players on the roster be from the local area, relaxed that requirement for the 1996 season, and several local players were released after the 1996 preseason, including Negrete. Two teams put in for Negrete's rights: the Sacramento Knights and the Pride. Since the Pride had a lower finish in 1995, they were awarded the rights to Negrete.

Negrete, who had been in San Diego for practically all of his life, was now based in Oregon. "Portland's a great place. It's a great city. I like it," he said of his new city.

Negrete's family still comes to the Sports Arena when Negrete is in town to face the Sockers, but he didn't feel that his first four games against the Sockers were significant. "It is pretty much not the team I grew up with or the team I played with," said Negrete, who was a Sockers fan long before joining the team.

He is uncertain whether he will return to El Cajon for the off-season. "I'll see what happens, just keep my options open," he said.

Non-racing East County resident leads Racers Against Drugs program

by Joe Naiman

Ray Dayon, who is in charge of public relations and promotions for this year's Racers Against Drugs Show 'N' Shine, isn't a racer himself. He just felt that the activity was worth his involvement.

"I like to give back to the community," said Dayon from his Lakeside home when asked why he was donating his time for the event. "It's just a worthwhile cause."

Dayon likes racing and some of his friends race at various tracks around the San Diego area. Shortly after the three-year-old Racers Against Drugs began, Dayon was at the Cajon Speedway with his wife when he heard an announcement that RAD was having a fundraiser. Immediately he wanted to get involved.

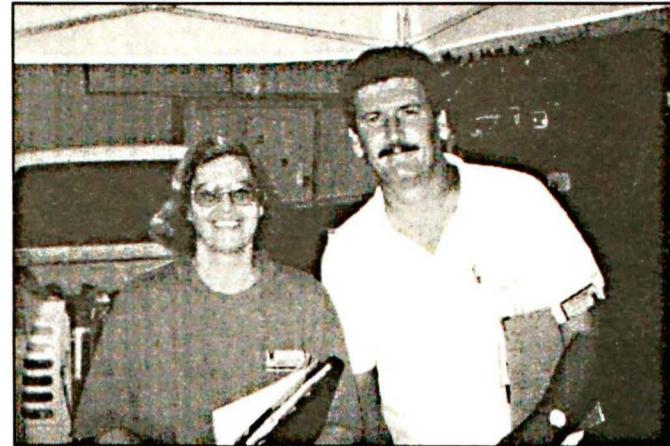
He contacted Bob Meese and Carol Timm, the leaders of Racers Against Drugs, who were both driving Bomber Stocks at the Cajon Speedway at the time.

Dayon has worked at Buck Knives for 22 years. He has some marketing tasks in his current position involving new product research and has access to company officials who are supportive of the racers' anti-drug efforts.

As a result Buck Knives has donated prizes for the annual Show 'N' Shine, which will be held Sept. 8 at the Cajon Speedway from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This year Dayon has gone beyond his own employer to get prizes donated for the raffle and the children's events.

Over 200 raffle prizes have been donated, including haircuts, automotive service and parts, Sea World and Disney-



Carol Timm and Ray Dayon pass out flyers for the Racers Against Drugs Show 'N' Shine.

land passes and hotel rooms in Las Vegas and Laughlin.

Hundreds of trinkets have been donated for the children's activities, which will include games, face painting, a jump castle, train rides, pony rides, petting zoo, reptile exhibit, sponge toss, rubber band gun game, ring toss and a golfing game.

"It's a fun raiser. We try to make it fun," said Dayon of the Show 'N' Shine, which Racers Against Drugs uses to fund the pledge cards and posters for the following year's visits to schools.

This year, Racers Against Drugs, whose strongest efforts have been aimed towards elementary school students, is also giving book covers to older students with the logo "Racing for dreams, not drugs."

"You don't have to be involved with racing to be a part of this," said Dayon, who noted the need for volunteers at the booths and food stands. "You just have to care."

Racers from the Cajon Speedway, Barona Speedway and San Diego Karting Association, not only attend, but let

children sit in the racecars. Car clubs bring their classic vehicles for display and law enforcement agencies also have booths.

Admission is \$2 for adults, with children 15 and under free and a \$5 maximum family admission. In 1995, an estimated 3,000 people attended the Show 'N' Shine.

Dayon was born and raised in the San Diego area, graduating from Grossmont High School. "I'm very East County oriented."

Dayon stresses that the active participation numbers over a dozen racers and supporters.

"I'm just one person in a group," he proclaimed. "I just happen to be the guy who is in charge of getting the word out."

Last year, Dayon was the co-chair of publicity for the Show 'N' Shine.

"It's an opportunity to help people help us help kids to reach for dreams, not drugs," said Dayon. "The whole purpose is to show them an alternative they can choose to keep them away from gangs and drugs."

Fire spoils Doetsch's debut at Cajon

by Joe Naiman

El Cajon's Rick Doetsch's first race at Cajon Speedway ended when the firewall of his truck caught on fire, taking him out of the track's first-ever Ultra Wheel Spec Truck Series race and Doetsch's second truck race ever.

Doetsch had qualified fifth but had a disappointing first heat, finishing last. He started 13th in the main event and moved up to 10th before his truck caught on fire.

The fire capped a night which Doetsch felt had not been going well, especially with regard to track officials' decisions to place drivers in back after being involved in incidents which caused laps to be run under the yellow caution flag. "They kept putting me in the back every time there was a spinout. They put me in the back, and I didn't even cause them. I was mad."

Although Doetsch was disappointed, he said that he

would definitely return to the track Oct. 5, when truck races will be held again at the Cajon Speedway. "It was a real riot out there," he said of his experience at the El Cajon track.

Doetsch, now 35, grew up in El Cajon and Santee and attended Santana High School. He has owned Doetsch Tech, a shock absorber company, for the past 14 years.

Doetsch started his career in off-road racing. He raced in the 7S class in the SCORE racing series, winning several races while teaming with Scott Douglas.

He temporarily retired from racing in the early 1990s and took up the sport of rodeo. His bullriding career lasted for about three years. "Too rough on the body. Too much mental stress," he said.

The death of bullrider Paul Coronado in Lakeside last year caused Doetsch to quit rodeo. Racing, he noted, contained the same adrenaline high but significantly reduced his chances of waking up in the

hospital. "This isn't too bad because you know you're going to go home."

His age and lack of progress as a bullrider also influenced his decision. "With my age and everything, I knew I didn't have a future in it."

Six months ago, Doetsch took up kart racing in the Formula 125 class. He practiced at Cajon Speedway, but all of his actual races were at the Amago track in North County.

"I got a little road experience up there in that and I got into this," said Doetsch of going from karting to truck racing. Doetsch made his truck racing debut in late June at the Orange Show track in San Bernardino. He finished second in his first race.

Although he won't race at Cajon Speedway until October, Doetsch still has a presence at the track. Doetsch Tech is a sponsor of the Sportsman Stocks car of driver Jerry Gay and the Pony Stocks car of Ty Tipton.

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